

1 S.192

2 Introduced by Senator Pollina

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Education; public postsecondary education; funding; scholarships

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to establish a
7 task force to develop a detailed plan to create and implement the Vermont Pay
8 it Forward, Pay Back College Affordability Program. The Program shall
9 replace the current system of charging postsecondary tuition and fees to
10 students enrolled in Vermont public postsecondary institutions with a system
11 in which eligible Vermont students pledge to pay a certain percentage of future
12 earnings for a specified number of years upon graduation or disenrollment.

13 An act relating to the Vermont Pay it Forward, Pay Back College
14 Affordability Program

15 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

16 Sec. 1. VERMONT PAY IT FORWARD, PAY BACK COLLEGE

17 AFFORDABILITY PROGRAM; TASK FORCE

18 (a) Creation. There is established a task force to develop a detailed plan to
19 create and implement the Vermont Pay it Forward, Pay Back College
20 Affordability Program (the Program) pursuant to the terms of this section. The

1 Program shall replace the current system of charging postsecondary tuition and
2 fees to students enrolled in Vermont public postsecondary institutions with a
3 system in which eligible Vermont students pledge to pay a certain percentage
4 of future earnings for a specified number of years upon graduation
5 or disenrollment.

6 (b) Membership. The Task Force shall be composed of:

7 (1) the seven members of the Prekindergarten–16 Council required by
8 16 V.S.A. § 2905(d) to perform duties related to the Higher Education
9 Endowment Trust Fund;

10 (2) one faculty member of the University of Vermont appointed by
11 United Professions American Federation of Teachers Vermont (AFT);

12 (3) one faculty member and one staff member of the Vermont State
13 Colleges appointed by AFT; and

14 (4) two students, one from the University of Vermont and one from
15 the Vermont State Colleges, appointed by their respective student
16 government associations.

17 (c) Duties.

18 (1) The Task Force shall develop a detailed plan to create and
19 implement the Program. At a minimum, the plan shall:

20 (A) identify one or more Vermont public postsecondary
21 institutions to participate in the Program;

1 (B) require that eligible students be Vermont residents who
2 qualify for and have been offered admission to the institution;

3 (C) require that, in lieu of paying tuition or fees prior to
4 enrollment, each eligible student shall enter into a contract to pay a
5 certain percentage of future earnings for a specified number of years
6 upon graduation or disenrollment; provided, however, that although the
7 proposal shall specify both the appropriate percentage and the number
8 of years, either or both:

9 (i) may vary by institution;

10 (ii) may vary based on whether the student is enrolled in a
11 program leading to an associate's or a bachelor's degree; and

12 (iii) may vary based upon an individual's ability
13 to pay; and

14 (D) determine the amount that shall be transferred from the
15 Vermont Higher Education Endowment Trust Fund or identify an
16 alternative funding source for initial capitalization of a revolving fund
17 that will be established to make payments to participating institutions
18 and receive repayments from eligible individuals and determine the
19 minimum amount of funding required for initial capitalization.

20 (2) To develop the plan required by this section, the Task
21 Force shall:

1 (A) study similar efforts in other states and countries,
2 including programs that provide tuition-free enrollment or that freeze
3 tuition rates for each incoming class; and

4 (B) solicit comments at no fewer than two public hearings.

5 (d) Assistance. The Task Force shall have the administrative,
6 technical, and legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Council and
7 the Joint Fiscal Office.

8 (e) Report and proposal. On or before January 15, 2015, the Task
9 Force shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees
10 on Appropriations, on Education, and on Government Operations, the
11 House Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Committee on
12 Finance detailing its plan, which shall include a timeline for
13 implementation and recommended legislation.

14 (f) Meetings.

15 (1) The Office of Legislative Council shall call the first meeting
16 of the Task Force to occur on or before July 15, 2014.

17 (2) The Task Force shall select a chair from among its members
18 at the first meeting.

19 (3) The Task Force shall cease to exist on July 1, 2015.

1 (g) Reimbursement.

2 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the
3 General Assembly, legislative members of the Task Force shall be
4 entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of expenses
5 pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406.

6 (2) Student members of the Task Force who are not employees
7 of the State of Vermont and who are not otherwise compensated or
8 reimbursed for their attendance shall be entitled to per diem
9 compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 32 V.S.A.
10 § 1010 from the General Assembly's budget for fiscal year 2015.

11 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

12 This act shall take effect on passage.